

Message Text

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67

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-06 SSO-00 OPR-01 /011 W

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O 252258Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1183

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7195

STADIS/LIMDIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, CI

SUBJECT: GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE - REVIEW OF CONSULAR
PROTECTION OF US CITIZENS DURING CRISIS

REF: STATE 243332

1. GAO TEAM ACCOMPANIED BY GAO ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
LOUIS W. HUNTER CALLED ON AMBASSADOR NOV 25, AT OUTSET
ITS INVESTIGATION OF EMBASSY'S DISCHARGE OF ITS
RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROTECT US CITIZENS DURING
SEP 1973 COUP IN CHILE. WHILE EMBASSY ANTICIPATES
THAT IT CAN SATISFY TEAM'S REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION
REGARDING SPECIFIC PROTECTION PROBLEMS, WE FORSEE TWO
AREAS IN WHICH DIFFICULTIES LIKELY TO ARISE.

2. FIRST AREA HAS TO DO WITH SCOPE OF INFORMATION
AND FILES TO BE AFFORDED TO TEAM. TEAM DIRECTOR
PLUNKETT OPENED BY STATING THAT IN ORDER TO ASSESS
ADEQUACY OF PROTECTION FUNCTION IT WAS NECESSARY
TO HAVE ACCESS TO EMBASSY'S POLITICAL REPORTING, INCLUDING
RESTRICTIVE DISTRIBUTION CAPTION TRAFFIC, IN CONNECTION WITH COUP AND
PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO RESUMPTION OF FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS,
WHICH TOOK PLACE SEPT 25, 1973. WE NOTED THAT MUCH OF THIS
MATERIAL WAS SENSITIVE; SUGGESTED DEPT WAS BETTER
ABLE TO DETERMINE PRECISELY WHAT SHOULD AND
SHOULD NOT BE MADE AVAILABLE; AND DEFERRED FURTHER
CONSIDERATION OF THIS SUBJECT UNTIL TEAM PRODUCES A
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CLEARER INDICATION OF WHAT EXACTLY IT WANTS TO SEE,

AND WHY. WE SUGGESTED THAT MANY OF TEAM'S NEEDS MIGHT BE MET IN COURSE OF ITS DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICERS WHO WERE ON THE SCENE IN SEPT 1973.

3. SECOND PROBLEM HAS TO DO WITH SCOPE OF TEAM'S CONTACTS. WHILE TEAM INDICATED IT DID NOT WISH TO DISCUSS ITS MISSION WITH ANY CHILEANS, IT EXPRESSED DESIRE TO INTERVIEW OFFICIALS IN SIX FOREIGN EMBASSIES (SWEDEN, NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, MEXICO, FRANCE, VENEZUELA) AND ECLA -- LATTER PRESUMABLY BECAUSE OF ITS CHARTER FLIGHT FOR UN-SPONSORED PERSONNEL. PURPOSE WOULD BE TO GAIN PERSPECTIVE THROUGH COMPARISON OF STEPS TAKEN BY THOSE EMBASSIES TO PROTECT THEIR RESPECTIVE NATIONALS, AS COMPARED TO US EMBASSY PERFORMANCE. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO THINK MATTER OVER SINCE IT INVOLVED OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES.

4. WITH REGARD TO TEAM'S DESIRE TO VISIT OTHER EMBASSIES, PROBLEMS WILL ARISE NO MATTER HOW WE PLAY THIS ONE. TO REFUSE GAO TEAM'S REQUEST WILL BE TO PUT EMBASSY IN DEFENSIVE AND UNHELPFUL POSITION OF RESTRICTING TEAM IN DISCUSSIONS WHICH IN A SENSE ARE GERMANE TO ITS MISSION. ON OTHER HAND, TO FACILITATE TEAM'S DISCUSSIONS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE EMBASSIES WILL RESULT IN THEIR REPORTING TO HOME FONOFFS, GREATLY INCREASE DANGER OF DISTORTED PUBLICITY EMANATING FROM SANTIAGO AND OTHER POINTS, AND PRODUCE POSSIBLY PREJUDICIAL SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS AS EMOTIONALLY COMMITTED FOREIGN DIPLOMATS COMPARE THEIR OWN COUNTRIES' STANCE REGARDING THE WHOLE MATRIX OF REFUGEE AND ASYLEE POLICY WITH THAT OF USG.

5. ON BALANCE I FEEL IT IS PREFERABLE TO FACILITATE SUCH CONTACTS, KEEPING THEM AS INFORMAL AND LOW-KEY AS POSSIBLE. BEFORE INFORMING TEAM, HOWEVER, I WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FROM DEPT AN INDICATION AS TO WHETHER A SIMILAR PROBLEM HAS EVER ARISEN IN A PREVIOUS GAO EXERCISE; IF SO, HOW IT WAS HANDLED; AND WHETHER DEPT HAS OBJECTION TO PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION. PLEASE ADVISE PROMPTLY.

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6. WE ARE INFORMING GOC INFORMALLY, AT MEDIUM LEVEL, CONCERNING TEAM'S PRESENCE AND ITS MISSION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GAO AUDITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANTIA07195
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740342-0118
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741114/aaaaalvs.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: STATE 243332
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <20-Nov-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE - REVIEW OF CONSULAR PROTECTION OF US CITIZENS DURING CRISIS
TAGS: CASC, CI
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005